

ABSTRACT

In a preferred aspect of the present invention, a method for augmenting a hierarchy of layered applications and corresponding protocols can include applying a discrimination algorithm to a selection process in which a particular application/protocol layer in a listing of adjacent application/protocol layers is selected to receive traffic flowing through the hierarchy. A new application/protocol layer can be inserted adjacent to the particular application/protocol layer in the hierarchy. Also, the new application/protocol layer can be added to the listing. Finally, the discrimination algorithm can be replaced with another discrimination algorithm programmed to consider the new application/protocol layer during the selection process. Significantly, each of the steps of performing the inserting, adding and replacing steps can be performed without decoupling or disabling other applications and protocols in the hierarchy.